

[1908]

## Some Opinions

regarding the

## Juvenile Court System

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“J’ai reçu les documents intéressants que vous m’avez envoyés au sujet du relèvement de l’enfance coupable. Cette question est assurément d’une haute portée au point de vue moral et social. Tous ceux que les circonstances providentielles appellent à exercer quelque influence dans le vie de leurs concitoyens se doivent à eux-mêmes, et tout autant doivent à la confiance qu’on leur témoigne, de ne se jamais désintéresser d’aucune question qui regarde la formation ou encore le relèvement de l’enfance. Car les enfants sont pour la patrie les réserves de l’avenir. En travaillant pour eux on travaille pour son pays.

Ces jeunes coupables, combien souvent en effet ils méritent surtout de la sympathie. Et je crois que le séjour dans une prison, quelque bien surveillée qu’elle soit, est loin d’être sans dangers pour des enfants qui ont pu être coupables dans une heure de faiblesse mais qui n’ont pas l’habitude du mal.

Déjà, par ailleurs, dans les revues qui traitent de cette question et notamment dans les comptes-rendus de ce qui a été fait à Philadelphie et dans le Colorado, j’ai pu me convaincre de l’utilité des réformes pratiques que vous suggérez et dont, encore une fois, j’approuve bien volontiers le principe.

C’est la force et c’est l’honneur de ceux que la Providence appelle à diriger les autres—aux

législateurs par conséquent—de se souvenir  
 toujours que "gouverner, c'est prévoir."—  
 ARCHBISHOP BRUCHESI.

"Something will have to be done to reform our court system in regard to treatment of young truants. I have had no less than seventy-five of them before me this fall, and since last spring I have had to sentence to the penitentiary about half a dozen youths under twenty years of age. We certainly should have a special judge and a special court for these young boys, but our whole system will have to be reformed, for at present I have no means of finding out the character of a young boy brought before me except by applying to his parents or to the complainants. The courts and educational institutions should work together in this connection. Of course we have a good reformatory here in Montreal for Catholic boys, and one at Sherbrooke for the Protestants, but the proper place to train a child is at home and at school, and crime among our young people will not decrease until this is generally recognized by all our judges."—JUDGE F. X. CHOQUET.

"After an experience of nearly a year in the work of probation officers as an aid in carrying out the provisions of the law regarding juvenile offenders, I can say the success of their efforts has been more than I ever anticipated. By their aid we have been able to satisfactorily determine every case as it arose without condign punishment, not one single case of commitment to goal either before or after trial having taken place during the time they have been acting with the police. I feel satisfied that with an active Board in the Children's Aid Society, competent and vigilant probation officers, together with the active co-opera-

tion of Judges and Magistrate, the problem of how to deal with juvenile delinquency will be fully solved."—GEO. O. LA RONDE, Chief Constable, Ottawa.

"It affords me much pleasure to see that the problem without fear of contradiction has been solved. The Magistrate has done much good work in the reformation of our city. I find the juvenile population is very much less than last six months, and that all the efforts have the interest of the Society. It is a pleasure to have to do with LA RONDE, Chief Constable,

"Upwards of six thousand cases come before the Magistrate and the Court of Probation Association. Each one needed guidance, and each one needed a stimulus. Each one received it from the Philadelphia Juvenile Probation Association and the Probation Association. The Probation Association is the keystone of the work, and it depends on the selection of the best judges and higher ideals in the children's court to help the parents."—THEODORE LA RONDE, Court of Probation Association.

"There is no doubt that the work done in the Children's Court is of the highest importance and is much encouraged. I trust the success with the Juvenile Court will be a great help to Parliament, and that in view of all your expectations."—ANGLIN.

"I am in hearty sympathy with the measure."—HON. J. G. B. PROVINCIAL, Province of Alberta.

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GEO. O'KEEFE, Police Magis-

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THEODORE J. LEWIS, Juvenile  
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—HON. A. P. RUTHERFORD,

"Everyone of right feeling must be in favor of  
such a bill. It is like jumping into the water to  
save persons who, by carelessness or accident, have  
fallen in and are about to drown. I hope the Bill  
will become law without delay, and will be carried  
into effect by the several legislatures."—HON. MR.  
JUSTICE MACLENNAN, Judge of Supreme Court of  
Canada.

"I have read the Bill regarding Juvenile Delin-  
quents that you sent me, and I regard the principle  
of it as good and salutary. I am convinced that  
a Juvenile Court and Probation System, such as  
the Bill provides for, if properly managed and  
controlled, would, especially in large communities,  
be a great improvement on the mode now generally  
adopted in Canada with regard to the treatment  
of youthful offenders."—W. W. SULLIVAN, Chief  
Justice of Prince Edward Island.

"I hasten to express my sympathy with the  
movement and my approval of the Bill."—J. W.  
LONGLEY, High Court Judge, Nova Scotia.

"The Bill appears to be thoroughly satisfactory  
and complete. That Canada has been slower than  
many other countries in pressing forward this  
great reform is not creditable. Substantial pro-  
gress is now being made, and the enactment of the  
proposed measure will greatly facilitate the good  
work."—W. B. WALLACE, County Court Judge,  
Halifax, N.S.

"The establishment of a Juvenile Court is of  
the utmost importance for these three amongst  
other reasons:—(a) Because a more careful treat-  
ment of the boy or girl criminal is now recognized  
as a matter of the highest importance. (b) Be-  
cause excellent results have followed upon the  
establishment of Juvenile Courts in other cities.

(c) Because the environment of the ordinary criminal court is highly injurious to the youthful mind."—REV. DR. SYMONDS.

"I am heart and soul with you in this admirable work you have on hand. The rescue of juveniles from a criminal career means much for the future of the country, and I am sure when the Bill comes up for discussion it will receive the most careful consideration of the members of the Senate and the House of Commons."—SENATOR CONNERY, Editor Catholic Record.

"By all means let us have Juvenile Courts. It is in the interest of the whole community that juvenile delinquents should be given a chance to reform. We should not perpetuate the errors of the past by bringing children into unnecessary association with hardened criminals, as the present form of court trial too often permits. The fact that under existing conditions many magistrates endeavor to overcome the evil by dealing with juvenile cases as privately and leniently as possible only goes to prove the contention that the present official system is wrong, and should be changed. The method of trial in such cases should not be left entirely to the personal feeling and convenience of the individual magistrates. Let us have Juvenile Courts and give the youngsters a chance to become good citizens."—GEORGE DRUMMOND, J. P.

"Any movement that has for its object the reformation of juvenile delinquents has my hearty sympathy. Make it easy for the boys to do right, and hard for them to do wrong. It is better to make a boy a help to the State than a menace to the community."—S. H. CARPENTER, Chief of Detectives.



"No doubt whatever federal legislation establishing the Children's Courts would be a powerful check on crime, and *ipso facto* the pride of our Criminal Code."—GOVERNOR C. A. VALLÉE.

"My sympathies are with the movement."  
JAMES MORGAN.

"We have had Children's Courts for some time working in Dublin, and there is no likelihood that they will ever revert to the old plan there. I think you will find that all your legislators who are fathers will readily respond to your appeal for Juvenile Courts."—REV. J. PATERSON-SMYTHE.

"It is calculated that every able-bodied male emigrant is worth one thousand dollars to the State. Yet there are at the present moment no less than 2,000 able-bodied men confined in our goals and penitentiaries, not only making no contribution to the wealth of the community, but housed and supported and guarded at great expense by the State. The establishment of Juvenile Courts, notwithstanding its expense, will save thousands and thousands of dollars to the taxpayers. To this work both duty and interest call. Neglect it, and you will pay the penalty in increase of crime, for these delinquent children of to-day are the adult criminals of to-morrow."—W. L. SCOTT, Chairman Children's Aid Society, Ottawa.

"Our parole system is accomplishing much good, but what is the use? For every man released on parole there are ten boys qualifying to take his place."—W. P. ARCHIBALD, Dominion Parole Officer.

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